



Standard Operating Procedure – Indiana SVRS
Office of the Secretary of State – Indiana Election Division

Voter List Maintenance

VRG58.2

IED sanctions the publication of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) document as guidance regarding the appropriate use of Indiana's Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS). Its intent is to facilitate consistent use of the SVRS among the counties. It is to the mutual benefit of all system users that the guidance provided in this and other SOPs be adhered to by county election officials. Under all circumstances, federal law and Indiana Election Code must be adhered to by all users. This and other SOPs may provide IED's interpretation of federal law(s) and Indiana election code. The content of this SOP is subject to revision by IED

EXHIBIT

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1. Purpose

This SOP provides guidance relative to various voter list maintenance activities, which is the ongoing responsibility of each county voter registration official.

2. References

42 U.S.C. 1973gg-6(a)(4)

42 U.S.C. 1973gg-6(c)(2)(B)(i)

IC 3-5-2 - Definitions

IC 3-7-38.2 – Voter List Maintenance Programs

IC 3-7-38.2-2 (g,h) – Length of Inactive Voter Status

IC 3-7-39 – Address Changes by Voter on Registration Records

IC 3-7-41 – Name Changes on Registration Records

IC 3-7-43 – Removal From Registration Records Due to Request of Voter

IC 3-7-45 – Removal Due to Death

IC 3-7-46 – Removal Due to Incarceration

IC 3-7-48 – Determining Registration Status on Election Day (fail safe procedures)

3. Definitions

Expedited basis is defined as "not later than forty-eight (48) hours after (a document pertaining to a voter record) is received by a county voter registration office".

4. General Guidance

Voter list maintenance is the responsibility of each county voter registration official. It is an ongoing process both before and after each election, which includes:

- Cancelling deceased voter records via the DOH hopper
- Cancelling disfranchised voter records via the DOC hopper
- Cancelling disfranchised voter records via County Sherriff quarterly reports
- Cancelling voters who have contacted the VR office in writing indicating their desire to be removed from the list (VRG-14 or notice about registration in another jurisdiction)
- Cancelling voters who were made inactive more than two Federal General Elections previously and have not updated their registration, voted or appeared to vote.
- Inactivating voters whose voter registration address appears to be inaccurate, based on the NCOA mailing process

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5. Department of Health Hopper

Under State law, death records are required to be processed on an expedited basis of 48 hours within receiving the record.

Please see SOP VRG03.1 for additional detail.

6. Department of Correction Hopper

Under State law, DOC records shall be processed on an expedited basis of 48 hours within receiving the record.

Please see SOP VRG12.1 for additional detail.

7. Cancellation at the Voter's Request

A voter may simply request their registration be cancelled. Please see form VRG-14 for more information.

A voter who moves to another State may register in the new State. The election official in the new state may send the Indiana Election Division a notification indicating a voter formerly registered in Indiana has registered in their State. The Indiana Election Division sends notifications from other States to the counties on a regular basis. These voters should be cancelled.

8. Voters Inactive for More Than Two Federal General Elections

Federal law requires all States to maintain the accuracy of their statewide computerized voter lists and cancel voter registration records that meet both of the following criteria:

1. Voter was made inactive by the county not later than the 90th day prior to the General Election which occurred two general elections ago and
2. Voter has not voted or attempted to vote from that registration address at any election through the second General Election after the record's date of inactivation. If the voter updates the voter's record within the 2 General Election cycle, the update serves as a way to move the voter's record back to active status.

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The Indiana Election Division advises all counties to comply with these Federal laws and cancel any voter records that meet the criteria described above so these voters do not appear on a registration record for future elections.

NOTES:

- A voter cannot be changed directly from active to cancelled status in SVRS due to a lack of voter history
- A voter cannot be moved from active to inactive status in SVRS due only to a lack of voter history. Instead, the voter registration office must determine a voter has a bad address by following accepted procedures outlines in IC 3-7-38.2-2
- A voter can only be moved from active to inactive status in SVRS if a total of two **qualified** mailings have been sent to a voter (one of which must be the NCOA mailing) and the proper procedures have been followed.

The Indiana Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS) contains functionality to assist Counties with performing this voter list maintenance activity. Specifically, the SVRS permits county voter registration offices to automatically identify and cancel voter records meeting the criteria above.

A county voter registration office must complete all mass voter list maintenance activities not later than 90 days prior to a Primary, General or Municipal Election, **with the exception of:**

- The written request of the voter.
- Disenfranchisement due to criminal conviction and incarceration.
- The death of the voter.

Before using the system to perform voter list maintenance activities, Counties must be sure that all vote history has been posted for all past elections. If a County has not posted vote history for one or more elections there may be voters in the SVRS who are incorrectly assigned an inactive status. **Voters may be inaccurately cancelled if a county chooses to run the auto-cancel functionality without posting all vote history.**

If a county is not comfortable cancelling voters in a batch process, voters can be manually cancelled with the cancellation reason of "Inactive for 2 General Elections."

Note: The voter's status must be set to "Inactive" for more than 90 days before this option appears.

For step-by-step instructions about posting vote history, please visit the IN SVRS County Portal (<https://clients.questis.com/INSVRS/CountyPortals/default.aspx>) and view Shared Documents > Training Materials > Post Election Processing.



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9. NCOA Mailing Process

For ease of understanding, this process can be displayed in 5 steps.

Step 1

Voter is sent a mailing as part of regular office correspondence, or voter list maintenance mailing and the mailing is returned as undeliverable. Mailings in this section may include Voter Acknowledgement Cards (for voters with existing registration records), as well as poll location assignment notices, jury service notices.

Note: If a voter acknowledgement card is returned within the 7 day pending period, the record is rejected and there is no active record that needs to be inactivated.

Step 2

There are many reasons why the US Postal Service returns mail to the sender. The county must review each piece of undelivered mail and make a determination as to why the mailing was returned. Some reasons why mail is returned include:

- (a) Addressee signed a PS Form 3575-Change of Address form
- (b) House number or street name incorrect
- (c) Address unreadable (due to damaged or smudged mail)
- (d) Resident refused to accept service
- (e) Postage missing or insufficient
- (f) Addressee temporarily away

A county can only proceed to Step 3 after determining that the address is not the voter's current residence address

Step 3

Once the voter registration office makes the determination that mail is returned due to change of address, the voter shall receive a second correspondence meeting the criteria outlines in IC 3-7-38.2-11 and IC 3-7-38.2-13. This second correspondence is referred to as a NCOA mailing.

This notice must have postage prepaid for a return response as well as be sent by forwarded mail.

Currently, this process is automated in SVRS when the mailing in Step 1 was a voter acknowledgement card or polling place location notice generated in SVRS.

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For step by step instructions on how to generate an NCOA mailing, please visit the IN SVRS County Portal (<https://clients.questis.com/INSVRS/CountyPortals/default.aspx>) and view Shared Documents > Training Materials > NCOA Mailing for Active Voters.

Step 4

There will be one of four outcomes after an NCOA mailing is sent in Step 2:

1. Voter will return card indicating they still live at the residence address. County should update the correspondence record indicating the NCOA mailing was returned by the voter with no changes.
2. Voter will return card indicating they have moved to a new residence address within the same county. The voter's registration record should be updated to reflect the new address and status will go to Pending. A voter acknowledgement card should be sent out to verify the new address.
3. Voter will return card indicated they have moved to a new residence address in a different Indiana County or a different state. The voter's existing registration record should be cancelled. It is the voter's responsibility to submit a voter registration application in the new county or new State.
4. No response is received from the voter for more than 31 days (3-5-2-1.7(2)), so the voter's registration record status should be changed to Inactive.

Step 5

Voters who are inactivated under Step 3 will remain "Inactive" through two Federal General Elections unless they update their registration, vote or appear to vote (3-7-38.2-15).

10. Revision History

Revision	Date	Reason for Revision
0		New
1	10/11/2009	Detail added to clarify when a voter should be moved to inactive and cancelled statuses.

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